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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/697,499	10/27/2000	Junichi Kimizuka	35.C14958	3514
5514	7590	06/23/2006	EXAMINER	
FITZPATRICK CELLA HARPER & SCINTO 30 ROCKEFELLER PLAZA NEW YORK, NY 10112			ROHWER, JACOB P	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2625	

DATE MAILED: 06/23/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/697,499	KIMIZUKA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Jacob P. Rohwer	2625	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 April 2006.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 21-48 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) 21-34 is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 35-48 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) 35 is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on 27 Oct 2000 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____. | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

Claim 35 is objected to because of the following informalities: Line 12 recites “....sheet-edge margin is a based at least in part...”. This is grammatically incorrect. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 35 recites the limitation "said masking control step" in Lines 11-12. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. **Claims 36-40** are rejected to as being dependent upon a rejected claim.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 21-34 are allowed. Claims 35-40 contain allowable subject matter and will be allowable once the objection and 112 rejections specified above are clarified.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: The closest prior art varies masking and margins based on dot density, size of image, type of medium, and/or set parameters including formatting. However, there is no prior art that controls masking of a sheet-edge margin based on the type (or mode) of input device as specified in independent claims 21, 25, 31 and 35.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

Art Unit: 2625

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 41-48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by US

Patent No 6,222,611 to Asada.

Regarding claim 41, Asada discloses an image formation apparatus comprising:

plural lasers adapted to emit laser beam; (**Fig 1, Col 4 Lin 35-38**)

a scanning unit adapted to scan laser beams emitted from said plural lasers; (**Fig 1 #7, Col 4 Lin 57-65**)

an input unit adapted to input image data each corresponding to the plural laser beams; (**Fig 1 #9, Col 4-5 Lin 66-67 and 1-5**) and

a generation unit adapted to generate plural masking signals, each to control light emission of a corresponding one of the plural lasers, (**Fig 3 #13, Col 5 Lin 25-39, Col 6 Lin 48-52**)

wherein the plural masking signals are generated by said generation unit at mutually independent timings. (**Col 5 Lin 25-39, “respective” and “separate” synchronization signals, Col 4 Lin 57-65, Col 6 Lin 48-52**)

Regarding claim 42, Asada further discloses an apparatus according to claim 41, further comprising a detection unit adapted to detect a laser beam scanned, so as to generate a sync signal. (**Fig 1 #7, Col 4 Lin 57-65**)

Regarding claim 43, Asada further discloses an apparatus according to claim 42, wherein said generation unit generates each of the plural masking signals on the basis

of each of the plural laser beams detected by said detection unit. (**Col 4 Lin 57-65, Col 6 Lin 48-52**)

Regarding claim 44, Asada further discloses an apparatus according to claim 42, wherein said generation unit generates each of the plural masking signals on the basis of the single laser beam detected by said detection unit. (**Col 5 Lin 25-39, “respective” sync signals are generated separately**)

Regarding claims 45-48, please see rejection of claims 41-44 above, respectively. Additionally, the apparatus' of claims 45-48 perform the methods of claims 45-48.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed 27 April 2006, with respect to the Abe reference have been fully considered and are persuasive. The previous rejection based on the prior art provided in Abe has been withdrawn.

Applicant's arguments are now moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection provided in Asada as specified above with regard to claims 41-48.

Examiner reminds applicant that due to the withdrawal of the previous rejection and the submission of the new rejection citing the Asada Reference, this action is made non-final.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jacob P. Rohwer whose telephone number is 571-272-5509. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 9:00-5:30.

Art Unit: 2625

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kimberly Williams can be reached on 571-272-7471. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

 6/18/06



MARK ZIMMERMAN
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